



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

JANUARY 2016 VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

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\$1
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Looking forward to being warm, housed and able to work



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

We at Groundcover are starting the year with a profound sense of gratitude. Before we gear up for International Vendor Week at the start of February, we are counting our blessings. Our holiday party exceeded everyone's expectations as vendors, volunteers and supporters outdid themselves in giving to others. Further, the community's generosity has led to nearly all of our vendors having a secure, indoor location to sleep this winter.

Due to the tireless efforts and donations of our friends from St. Mary Student Parish and local businesses Sam's, Running Fit, Moosejaw and Fourth Av-

enue Birkenstock, every Groundcover vendor received the high-quality basic winter accessories they will need to work outside this winter. For some, this was the highlight of our holiday party at Bethlehem UCC that also featured an ample selection of sumptuous home-cooked food, a slide show of special Groundcover moments and vendors sharing a bit about themselves when they received their gifts.

Additional volunteer donations funded shopping expeditions to buy a personalized gift for each vendor, too. The hours of thought, shopping and wrapping were well-rewarded by how obviously touched the recipients were. Special kudos to Joe Woods for his vision and leadership on the personalized presents. Effusive thanks from our vendors included the following comments: "This is the first Christmas present I've received in years" and "This is so much more than I expected!"

On the housing front, nearly all of our long-term vendors now have a place to call home, at least through the winter. Two wonderful individuals each made an affordable place available for a Groundcover vendor in a building they owned. For one of the vendors, it is the first time in years that she's had a lease

in her name.

Also, an additional 44 units of subsidized housing became available in Washtenaw County this year. This was due in part to a \$1.5 million increase in HUD funding, largely as a reward for the exceptional achievements of the community in addressing homelessness.

The Zero:2016 campaign to end homelessness – making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring – led to many of our chronically homeless vendors being prioritized to receive supportive housing. As the campaign expands its focus to families, a mixed-housing development that includes some subsidized housing (as recommended by the Community Advisory Committee) on the county's Platt Rd. site will be vital to success, as will depositing half the funds from the sale of the library lot in downtown Ann Arbor into the Affordable Housing "Trust" Fund.

The first of the campaign's goals, to end veteran homelessness in Washtenaw County by the end of 2015, is projected for completion in February of 2016. To stay at a functional level of zero veteran homelessness, the number of vets experiencing homelessness within the county has to be no greater than the

county's monthly placement rate for veterans.

The county's single point of access housing support hotline – Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC) – has improved its phone system options. The automated system now provides callers with options to hear about specific resource assistance or get a call-back instead of being put on hold if no resource specialists are available. They also discontinued the lightly-used extended hours and redirected those resources to assisting with Housing Choice Vouchers at various locations, including the Delonis Center, Parkridge Community Center and Washtenaw Community College. Starting in February, **after-hours emergency shelter requests can be made by dialing 211.**

Recognizing that with the conditions that lead to homelessness still prevalent there will continue to be people newly thrown into dire circumstances, "ending homelessness" is being defined as having it be rare, brief and non-recurring. We are well on our way, thanks to the outstanding work of county and non-profit employees and the support of county residents.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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A vendor's perspective on setting and achieving life goals

by Kevin S.
Groundcover Vendor #307

There is a devil energy out there causing worldwide havoc, affecting us through our thoughts and decisions, making us think negatively about things and causing us to do things we normally would not do in a positive mental state. There are many ways to rid us of these negative thoughts. Here I will be sharing technologies and exercises that I have developed and pieced together to help turn devil negative energy into godly positive organic energy.

A brief history: I was born in 1982. My dad was a corrections officer, my mother a nurse. I was a Ritalin kid from the age of five until graduation. I had high anxiety as a side effect of the medication. I quit taking Ritalin to join the Navy – and that is when I started drinking.

After military life it was in and out of jail for drinking-and-driving offenses. Fresh out of the Navy, I worked for Washtenaw Country Club as a chef. I was asked if I wanted to make some real money being the locker room manager because I came in everyday primped and shoes shined. I eventually accepted, worked there for a year, then moved to

California to work at Moorpark Country Club – the country's number-one country club in 2002 – as their locker room manager. I lost that job to a DUI violation.

I never went back to cooking after being introduced to tips as a locker room manager. I traveled the country serving at diners, five-star restaurants and catering businesses. I was recruited by a window cleaner because of my height: six feet five inches. I eventually started

my own window cleaning business.

In 2010, I met a wonderful woman. We later got divorced due to the fact that I had started a marijuana business that got out of control, despite my being sober for three years. After the divorce I fell apart and started drinking again. I destroyed my illegal business and ended up incarcerated. While in prison, I learned valuable tools for business

see LIFE GOALS, page 4

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A word for the New Year



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Groundcover Contributor

I have never been big on New Year's resolutions. But there is one New Year's practice I have found meaningful for a handful of years. In fact, it became part of my yearly rhythm when I was still living in Ann Arbor.

The Abbey of the Arts is an online spiritual resource, www.AbbeyoftheArts.com, committed to pathways of new life through contemplative and expressive arts. This time of year they suggest we each listen for a word that we will find nourishing and challenging in the next calendar year, a word with which we can wrestle and grow. These are Abbey of the Arts verbs: nourish, challenge, wrestle, and grow.

The gift of a Pope

by Elizabeth "Lit" Kurtz
Groundcover Vendor #159

One of the most impactful moments of the past year was Pope Francis' visit to the United States, where he broke bread with homeless individuals on a downtown street in our nation's capital before addressing Congress.

During that momentous visit, perhaps it was fitting that in his 22-minute speech to our nation that he never mentioned the word homeless – but the substance of his speech, combined with his actions, undergirded the basic principles necessary to overcome homelessness. His message reminded us that, regardless of our religious affiliations, doctrines, careers or vocations, none of us can claim to be untouched by this current-day crisis.

In his speech, Pope Francis illustrated that despite the sluggishness of governments to move on our behalf, the overstrained bureaucracy of agencies, or even the societal obstinacy to change, the state of humanity is constant.

He reminded us that that we must never abandon the biblical command to love others as ourselves. We must practice empathy versus sympathy and be willing to walk a distance in our neighbor's shoes without judgment. The content of his message resonates widely, transcends our many ills, and offers the hope that homelessness will soon fade into the distant past.

This year, my word greeted me several weeks ago when I was walking on a beach at sunrise. My 2016 word is *gratitude*. Nearly 40 years ago, when I was a young pastor, I served a stubborn and delightful working class congregation in one of the most marginal neighborhoods in St. Louis. That congregation, Friedens (Peace) UCC, had a habit I have never forgotten. Whenever two, three, or more people sat down together and shared food and/or drink, there was a basket on the table. The gathering could be a big meal, a Wednesday quilting time, a planning meeting, or any other group activity, large or small. Those at the table threw a handful of change or maybe even a dollar into the basket as a gesture of thanks for being together.

Back in the late 1970s when I was first there, those baskets yielded hundreds of dollars a year from a congregation that wasn't all that big. Most of that money was turned over to support the array of mission and outreach projects to which

Friedens was committed.

In the years since then, I have attempted more than once to introduce their gratitude practice into other places of ministry where I've been. It has never transplanted successfully into the soil of another setting. On my recent early morning beach walk, I recognized that I'm still carrying the shape of that practice inside, not necessarily for another community I'm in, but rather for my own spiritual life.

And so in 2016 and hopefully beyond, I will claim one of my baskets as the gratitude one. Then I will develop a daily ritual of remembrance and appreciation for the day that is ending. My gratitude will be symbolized from day to day with small financial gifts to the basket. Periodically, following the Friedens example years ago, I will empty the basket of what has accumulated and offer it to a program I value or an effort I want to encourage.

The gifts I pass on will be modest. However, I know that small, intentional, repeated actions start to shape us and stretch us where we haven't been before. Or in the language of the Abbey of the Arts, those actions can contain "a seed of invitation to cross a new threshold in life." Embodying the Friedens gratitude practice will also allow me another honoring of a group of people who so called me forth to become and to continue to unfold as the spiritual leader I'm meant to be.

On the brink of 2016, I am grateful to the Abbey of the Arts for this simple exercise of receiving a renewing word for the 12 months ahead, grateful to a sunrise on the beach that quietly highlighted a word I have long carried, and grateful to a beloved Friedens people who modeled for me deliberate attention to gratitude as an essential element in the peace we might live. If you, like me, are not into the resolution business, might you consider the gift of a guiding word for 2016?

So, as we start a new year, we should enter it by applying the gift so graciously bestowed on us by Pope Francis. From public venues to private businesses, he clearly expressed how all of society's support is needed to emerge from this problem.

As such, Pope Francis' message should encourage government officials to reconsider the unique challenges of meeting the needs of all its constituents, especially those whose lives are on the margins. Our public libraries, which are like second homes to individuals who have none, might exert energy around how to better engage with members of the homeless community. Businesses who may have shunned our presence in the past should examine ways to connect with us and accentuate our similarities rather than our differences. The transit system, which has made dramatic changes over the past couple of years, should further tweak itself so as to include the needs of those who remain on the margins. Agencies committed to serving our needs should recognize the importance of our voices when making decisions which impact us. Churches that are not already connected with us should recognize the immediacy of our needs and become involved in helping to solve them. Those churches that faithfully serve us should always commit to improving so as to reach the full potential of what a church can do to quell this crisis.

As individuals, we must all be aware

of our stereotypical approaches to those who have fallen into homelessness and be cognizant that even those experiencing it were once only "a paycheck away." We must come together and recognize that, although life is fickle, our attitudes and perceptions of one another need not be. We must recognize the treasure that was bestowed upon us by Pope Francis

during 2015 and, rather than let it collect dust in our memories this year, keep it active in our minds, knowing that as we apply it to our daily actions, this century will soon witness the end of the crisis we call homelessness.

For more articles about homelessness, please visit my blog: youcantsaythatlit.weebly.com.



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Life goals reviewed daily

continued from page 2

that cannot be taught in school. I don't regret anything I have ever done, as it has made me the person I am today. I own it and I am using everything I ever went through as a tool to help me with my future.

My history is an example of suffering from negativity – my past is a result of a negative mindset. I am here now with my liberty and my best mindset in 33 years, ready to teach what I have learned.

First is a goal list. I created this model after a goal prayer list that my aunt showed me. I designed this because I wanted to accomplish more. It turned into something much bigger and I have learned along the way how beneficial this is to converting negative energy into positive energy.

The reticular activating system (RAS) plays a role in achieving goals. You know when you get a new car and all of a sudden you start seeing your new car everywhere? That is your powerful brain recognizing your car everywhere. I use RAS for my goals: I study the goals every morning so my brain can be gravitated to pick out any bit of information that will help me attain my goals. I would like to share my goals with you:

My goals

Spiritual goals: meditate/pray one hour a day, connect weekly with my support groups and spiritual friends. Read, heavy breathing meditation to fuel the brain with oxygen.

People to forgive: a lot of negativity comes from holding a grudge against people who have done you wrong. Learn to forgive and pray for (or send positive love energy to) them immediately, even if they have gone to the next place.

Relationship goals: raise a handsome baby with Cynthia, have fun together, cook together, work out together, go for walks, make out three minutes a day, garden together, smile at each other, laugh with each other, give massages, go to the relationship to give love, joy, compassion, excitement, loyalty, commitment.

Financial goals: to be financially independent, make \$10,000,000 or more a year, have a healing organic farm, own land, own private zoo, invest, collect silver and gold.

Fitness goals: play for the University of Michigan (U-M) football team, run 40 yards in 4 to 5 seconds, 30 dip-pull-ups, bench press 225 pounds 30 times, build



Groundcover vendor Kevin S. works out regularly at Planet Fitness on W. Stadium in pursuit of his fitness goals, including being injury-free and maintaining his 6-pack.

muscle and burn fat, weigh between 230-260 solid muscle, perfect six-pack, my body stays free of injuries. My body is a fat-burning machine, work out consistently, run, bike, go to the gym.

Daily prayers: pray for all of the people around me to be successful, happy, wealthy, and wise; pray for my newborn son and new positive leadership of the world.

Education goals: Washtenaw Community College, training in nutrition, psychology, botany, continuing education at U-M, obtain Pell grants, go to seminars.

Career goals: motivational speaker, therapist, drug counselor, sober living, prison jail seminars, youth leadership program, be a leader in many ways, real estate, rehab retreat infomercial.

Child goals: be the best father in the world, healthy child, teach my child music, perfect breast feeder for two years, well-mannered, happy, positive baby, successful birth, he will be a leader, strong, intelligent, a healer, has good morals, will be a leader. I will be an example for him; I will teach respect, honesty, and the consequences of his actions.

Toys/Adventure goals: farm, giraffe, private zoo, subtle energy organic garden, water restructuring, silver gold coin collection, pilot license, sky dive, cottage, art collection, go on space shuttle trip, go on nature trips with family.

Things I need to do: set up goal-oriented support group, write a timeline for goals, grow my own food, get a driver's license, learn to dance, perfect six-pack, healthy diet, food storage, become a

speed reader, massages once a week, change people's lives, command my subconscious to be the best I can be, compliment people, be a hero, fix feet, make flash cards for goals, get organization tools, create spending plan instead of budget.

Things not to do: do not argue with ignorant people, do not talk negatively about people, do not involve myself in negative conversation, do not get into conversations about drugs, do not go to bars.

Things I am committed to: I am committed to not selling drugs, I am committed to staying sober, I am committed to constantly improving myself on a daily basis. *Kaizen* (a Japanese term that means constant, never-ending improvement).

I read these next sentences everyday along with my goals: Do this every day and all of your goals will come true. The only impossible goal is a goal without a plan. Use this sheet as a tool to keep you in a positive mental state. Trust your intuition, be a hero, strive for balance, not perfection. Put yourself in a position where you can't be questioned. If you ask, you shall receive. Live in the present, plan for the future. Using is no longer an option. Be more understanding. Focus five percent on the problem and 95 percent on the solution. What could you be doing right now to help you achieve your goals? Sobriety is key. Spirituality is key.

(A list this big will not happen all at once. Start small and you will surely develop momentum.)

Achieving your goals

Step 1: Select an area in your life you

want to improve and describe what that area is currently like for you. Be specific. I will use weight as an example because I used to weigh 300 pounds.

Step 2: Write down the rituals that have shaped your current conditions. Be honest. For example, I would wake up each morning and eat a few donuts, 8 eggs, toast, deep-fried potatoes, fast food, processed foods; I would eat massive meals right before bed; I drank beer, liquor, wine. I would over-consume every day. Even when I was not hungry I found myself stopping at these horrible fast food places.

Step 3: Write down what it is that you want. Be specific. I want a perfect six-pack, I want to be healthy, I want all the chemicals in my body to be balanced, I want to lose ____ pounds, I want regular bowel movements, I want to learn as much as I can to help me lose this weight, I want to be happy, I want it to be simple.

Step 4: Write down rituals that will manifest your compelling vision. What would you need to do differently each day to get what you want? Will power does not work – rituals last a lifetime. (My new ritual lifestyle of eating is: consume high-alkaline fruits only until noon; lunch is 70 percent live greens and veggies, 30 percent carbs such as potatoes or sweet potatoes; dinner is 70 percent veggies and greens, 30 percent protein of fish, chicken, or beef.) Support local foods as much as possible. Divide your body weight, measured in pounds, by two and drink that much water in fluid ounces. Exercise on a regular basis (write a weekly schedule). Always pack your meals so you are prepared for the whole day. Only shop on the perimeter of the grocery store for whole foods; be extremely minimal on "dead" foods. Increase your branch chain amino acids and omega fatty acids through hemp hearts. Believe you are healthy and only make healthy decisions. Teach your taste buds to love wonderful, healthy foods.

*

I hope you found this article insightful and my suggestions something to abide by instead of the year-after-year failures of New Year's resolutions.

I would also like to thank everyone for their generous donations. I was able to get a bike, a Craftsman heated coat, gloves, hat, and save money to put towards a place to stay as, currently, I am staying at the shelter.

Now you've learned a little bit about one of the vendors for Groundcover News. Your donation helps a vendor, like myself, in transition to get and maintain housing. Thank you.

A week of celebration: International Vendor Week 2016 – February 1-7

by Elizabeth "Lit" Kurtz

The following quote is taken right off the International Network of Street Papers (INSP) website and announces a big event in the lives of vendors throughout the world:

"Each February, the INSP leads a celebration of thousands of street paper vendors who are working, in often difficult circumstances, to change their own lives. #VendorWeek 2016 takes place from 1-7 February. Why not join us?"

Groundcover is a part of that global network of papers and many vendors would like to plan special events in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti during Vendor Week. There are many possibilities, but some of the ones that we are pondering include:

1. A city-wide reading of Groundcover each day of that week. This would be a spinoff of an educational program called D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read!), which originally involved an entire school setting aside a set amount of time to read literature. The program was designed to help students appreciate reading. In schools, everyone from the principal to the custodian reads.

Our program would be D.E.A.R.-



Then-mayor John Hieftje, a celebrity guest vendor, hawked Groundcover News at the corner of Liberty and Main with Joe Woods during Vendor Week 2014.

Groundcover. We would ask that offices, schools, churches, businesses, etc. set aside time for everyone in that organization to read Groundcover during that week. The more participation, the greater our success.

2. A proclamation from the mayor setting aside the first week of the month of February as Groundcover Vendors Week.

3. Surprise tokens of appreciation for vendors when they are out sell-

ing. Last year, a group of students delivered hot chocolate and homemade cookies to vendors who were out selling despite the raging snowstorm.

These are the ideas we have on the table. We will be providing more information as we approach that date. Please go to our web-

site, groundcovernews.org, and click on "International Vendor Week" to stay abreast of the activities and see how you can get involved. If you are interested in helping, please contact us by January 12 by emailing contact@groundcovernews.com to the attention of either Lit or Rania.

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826michigan: promoting creative writing and robot awesomeness

by Isaac Weiss

Groundcover Homeschool Contributor

826michigan is one of the most interesting nonprofits in the area, and almost certainly the most fun. A variety of extraordinary educational programs lurk behind the facade of a store full of surprises.

The subtly steampunk stencil on the window of its Liberty St. location proclaims “Robot Supply & Repair,” and when you first enter the store you’re not disappointed – the merchandise aimed at robots and robot enthusiasts includes robot-themed posters and T-shirts, robot clocks powered by a lemon, and emotion packs to plug into your misbehaving robot. Asimov’s Laws of Robotics are prominently posted. There are doll-size robots on the shelves, and a human-size robot standing beside a curtained doorway occasionally recites pi to 43 decimal places.

There are more robots on the premises, according to Communications Coordinator Courtney Randolph, but they’re currently unavailable, hard at work and out of sight. “Dr. Blotch exploits the robots for financial gain,” she explained. More on that in a moment.

Behind the curtain lies the real purpose of 826michigan. Sitting around tables in the comfortable back room, small groups of children work with trained volunteer tutors with expertise in the subjects the students are working on. Four days a week, the organization offers free tutoring in all subjects to any students ages 8-18 who come here or to their Ypsilanti center. Drop-ins are welcome.

In addition to the tutoring, 826michigan hosts drop-in creative writing programs for all ages and evening/weekend writing workshops (though those require registration beforehand); offers a variety of in-school programs in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Detroit; and, under the guidance of the mysterious Dr. Blotch, publishes students’ work in multiple formats.

The writing workshops range from serious to silly (and never underestimate the importance of silliness in a kid’s life). Younger students might collaboratively compose a Twitter timeline documenting the interactions of well-known fairy tale characters, while older students might work on college application essays. Teachers can arrange to bring whole classes on field trips to Liberty Street, and leave after two hours with a printed and bound book that the students wrote themselves. All



Students of all ages work specific subjects with volunteer tutors inside the Liberty Street Robot Supply and Repair store, which houses 826michigan.

826michigan programs are offered free of charge to students, teachers, and schools.

The history of 826michigan and its charming robot shop goes back to a street address in San Francisco. In 2002, Dave Eggers, author of *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* and founder of McSweeney’s Publishing, wanted to open a tutoring center in the Mission, but due to zoning restrictions had to open a pirate supply store that just happened to also offer free writing workshops. The address was 826 Valencia Street. This has since led to similar enterprises opening up across the United States under the parent organization 826 National, mostly named for the specific city they are located in, though 826michigan serves multiple cities in Southeast Michigan. (The name is stylized as one word to avoid confusion with the address of 826 Michigan Avenue.)

When 826michigan opened in 2005 – also commercially zoned – they decided to open a robot shop because robots are appealing to everyone, young and old, and of both genders, according to Randolph. But the store, as both an important source of revenue and an attention-grabbing storefront, has become central to 826michigan’s identity, and they intend to push the envelope with the Detroit Robot Factory, opening within the next year to house 826michigan’s activities in Detroit.

Randolph says her favorite part of working with 826michigan is seeing the reactions of the kids whose work the organization publishes – they often don’t realize the reality of being published authors until they see and hold the book themselves.

Publications are done under the imprint of Blotch Books, personally edited by Dr. Blotch. Among their publications

is the annual *OMNIBUS*, an anthology of selected student writings from across all 826michigan’s programs (the most recent is *OMNIBUS VII*), and small chapbooks, either compiled from a single school after a few weeks or from theme-related pieces from a variety of schools.

They also release genuine formal publications. *A Lantern of Fireflies: An Illustrated Treasury of Tales of Adventure, Discovery, and Magic* (2015) is a collection of bedtime stories written by ninth-grade students at Huron High School (advised by Mitchell Elementary second-graders) and illustrated by a variety of professional artists and illustrators, including Ann Arbor’s own Erin Stead (Caldecott-winning illustrator of *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*) and Lemony Snicket collaborators Lisa Brown and Carson Ellis. *Enjoy! Recipes for Building Community* (2014) is a book of recipes written by ESL (English as Second Language) students from Ypsilanti, with bonus contributions by famous chefs like Mario Batali and Zingerman’s Ari Weinzwieg.

Where Is It Coming From? (2014) – the result of the first program Courtney Randolph was involved with – features stories by kids at the James and Grace Lee Boggs School in Detroit, with illustrations by none other than Dave Eggers, founder of the original 826 Valencia (with as little experience as an illustrator as the six-to-ten-year-olds had as authors). Blotch Books will release its first bilingual publication this year, a poetry anthology in both English and Spanish, featuring the work of students at Roberto Clemente Academy in Detroit.

So, who is this Dr. Blotch person who seems to mastermind all 826michigan’s operations? According to Randolph, his

voice (or her voice – it seems to change from day to day) is sometimes heard raised in disquiet at Liberty Street, but Blotch secretly enters and exits a private office in the building, and has never actually been seen.

“But Blotch’s influence is felt. Strongly felt,” Randolph said – most obviously in the foreword, in Dr. Blotch’s both inimitable and inimical style, included in every Blotch Books publication. “And of course we’re grateful,” Randolph added.

Disappointingly, Dr. Blotch was not available to be interviewed at press time. However, it seems important to briefly profile such an important figure at 826michigan. Dr. Blotch’s favorite activities include firing volunteers, voicing distaste for everybody and especially all children, decrying the pointlessness of stories, and amassing a personal fortune by profiting off stories written by children assisted by volunteers.

Randolph shared an anecdote which helps to better understand the character of this important personage.

A class of elementary school students recently visited Liberty Street for an 826michigan field trip. A warm and friendly “storyteller” welcomed them to the space, but was interrupted by the voice of Dr. Blotch, erupting from an unknown source. Blotch’s diary had been stolen, and the doctor was understandably outraged – even more so at the realization that children, a type of person that Blotch cannot understand the existence of, had been brought onto the premises.

As events unfolded, the children leaped to defend the storyteller from Blotch’s wrath, and set about appeasing Dr. Blotch by investigating the theft.

Various suspects were introduced and interrogated by the student detectives. Volunteers were on hand to type up transcripts of the information gathered, give the files to the kids and offer them examples of strong written conclusions.

The kids wrote letters to Dr. Blotch, ex-

see 826, page 11

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Meet Bridget Martin – freelance cosmetologist and Groundcover vendor

by Darrold Wallender
Groundcover Vendor #235

Bridget Martin, Groundcover vendor #236, has lived in Ann Arbor for about a year now. A licensed cosmetologist, she first came to Ann Arbor for a job at Zoey and Joey Studio. Zoey and Joey is a salon that specializes in haircuts for kids. Recently she was at Great Clips but has decided to go out on her own.

While building a clientele and getting on her feet, she has also started selling Groundcover News. She enjoys the freedom of being a Groundcover vendor and enjoys the people that she meets. That is what she loves the most – talking to people she meets on the streets.

You meet so many types of people and hear so many amazing stories. People from all walks of life get the paper. It's heart-warming in so many ways. A lot of people buy the paper two or three times a month just because they know it is a good cause.

But still, Bridget's true passion is doing hair. Even as a child she would cut and style her doll's hair. The poor family dog was even practiced on from time to time when she was young. You will often catch her standing in front of one of the many salons or barber shops around town watching a haircut being done. She always says you never stop learning new techniques.

Bridget believes that a fresh, new cut and style not only changes the appearance of a client; it also helps to build a person's self-esteem. She feels that it works both ways because every time she gives someone a haircut, her self-



Groundcover vendor Bridget Martin cutting the hair of fellow-vendor Timothy S. at the daytime warming center.

esteem raises up a notch just knowing that she made someone else feel better about themselves. It makes her heart smile.

"A haircut can do so many things for a person. It makes you feel better about yourself. It makes you look and feel more put together," Bridget says.

Bridget will be giving free haircuts to the homeless or anyone who can't afford it at the daytime warming center throughout the winter. A lot of people might not think a haircut would do much for a homeless person. But

Bridget says this is her way of giving back because so many people in Ann Arbor have helped her since she has moved here. Giving a homeless person a haircut could help them get a job or just make them feel good about the way they look. If that is the case, then she has accomplished her goal.

Bridget's plans for the future are to strengthen and widen her clientele for both hairstyling and Groundcover. She is currently offering at-home haircuts for people or families that can't or don't have the time to get out. If you are interested in these services, she can be contacted at bridgetairyan0725@gmail.com.


Again, Bridget will be offering free haircuts throughout the winter at the daytime warming centers.

Peace & Gratitude!
Seven years serving our neighbors with the Riverside Community Meal.
Every Wednesday 5-6 pm.

The First Presbyterian Church of Ypsilanti, aided by the Presbyterian Churches in Washtenaw County.



www.fpcy.org



St. Francis of Assisi

PARISH

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“A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just.”
Pope Francis

Mass Schedule

Saturday
5:00 p.m.

Sunday
7:00 a.m. 8:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 12:00 p.m. & 5:00 p.m.

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Ann Arbor, MI 48104
(734) 769-2550
www.stfrancisa2.com

Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2015

Well, tis the season!

What are you talking about?
The holidays are over.

Yes, and the beginning of January is when you ponder your greatness and how no resolution can make you more perfect. I'd love to hear your latest justifications.....

Oh please. It may surprise you to know that despite my perfection I've resolved to improve my performance by avoiding unnecessary distractions.

I hope I'm not one of them.

No mom, despite your oddness your presence in my life is a good thing; I'm talking about avoiding a distraction that has poisoned minds and wasted energy for years.....

Ooooh, what is it?!?

Politics. Give me citizen-referendums or don't waste my time; I'm done with personality cults.

Sudoku ★★★★★ 4puz.com

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Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote:

CBHM SNA YIM LS
 HZBDIEDFY SNAQ YNHGT
 DT FNM HT DXRNQMHFM
 HT CBHM SNA LIZNXI LS
 HZBDIEDFY SNAQ YNHGT.
 – PDY PDYGHQ

Clue: $\Lambda = \Xi$

FreeDailyCrosswords.com

Sunday, December 6, 2015
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 Edited by Timothy Parker

ACROSS

- 1) It's got you covered
- 5) Come in second
- 10) Beef dish
- 14) Like some testimony
- 15) Bearing a heavy load
- 16) Appeared
- 17) "Believe you me"
- 20) Like Santa Claus
- 21) Coffee shop freebie
- 22) It has the support of runners
- 25) Become unhinged
- 26) 76ers' org.
- 29) Angler's need
- 31) Banjo's cousin
- 35) Rope-a-dope boxer
- 36) An Oxford college
- 38) Mississippi feeder
- 39) Be ruthless in combat
- 43) Kind of rug
- 44) Play a set with the band
- 45) Ball holder
- 46) Filmed, in Hollywood slang
- 49) Grown-up grigs
- 50) Billboard displays
- 51) Poetry on a grand theme
- 53) Some reddish deer
- 55) Name on a ballot
- 58) Doctrine
- 62) Become the focus of attention
- 65) Pack ____ (give up)
- 66) Maternal relative
- 67) "Once ____ a time ..."
- 68) Dickinson or Frost, e.g.
- 69) Light lunch
- 70) Mole, to a gardener

DOWN

- 1) "____ Jail" (Monopoly directive)
- 2) Burnoose wearer
- 3) Yard neatener's tool
- 4) "God ____ America"
- 5) Work at, as a trade
- 6) Congress makes it
- 7) Public scenes
- 8) "It's two, two, two mints in one"
- 9) Bad thing to give away
- 10) Zodiac creature
- 11) Weight not counted in pricing
- 12) VIP of UAE
- 13) "Slippery when ____"
- 18) Carnegie ____ University
- 19) German "Mrs."
- 23) Continental cash
- 24) Doesn't exactly flow
- 26) Birth-based
- 27) Trumpet noise
- 28) "American Idol" contestant Clay
- 30) Chill-inducing
- 32) Sweater letter
- 33) Broadcasted
- 34) Valentine's Day gift
- 37) Soda-bottle size
- 40) Nonowner's property right
- 41) Cylindrical structure
- 42) Commencements
- 47) Very impressive
- 48) Charitable organizations
- 52) Medicinal herb
- 54) Play matchmaker to
- 55) Belgium-based gp.
- 56) Steinbeck's Joad, e.g.
- 57) Bibliographical abbr.
- 59) Scruff of the neck
- 60) They give people big heads
- 61) Camping item
- 62) Bellhop's expectation
- 63) LAX posting
- 64) ____ blood cells

GIMME!

By Ellsworth Parks

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Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:
 contact@groundcovernews.com
 734-707-9210



Bethlehem
United Church of Christ
 423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
 734-665-6149
Bethlehem Church is the home of the Groundcover office

Sunday Worship Times

8:30 am and 10:00 am
 Sunday school at 10:15 am
 Fellowship Hour follows each service

January Community Events – Welcome!

Jan. 3 (Sun.) One Worship Service only, at 10 am, with Communion
 Jan. 4 (Mon.) Faith Formation Class, every Monday at 7 pm
 Jan. 5 (Tue.) Faith Formation Class, every Tuesday at 1 pm
 Jan. 16 (Sat.) German Pretzel Sales, 10:30 -12 pm, \$1 or \$10 dozen
 Jan. 18 (Mon.) Martin Luther King Day
 Jan. 24 (Sun.) Neil Anderson Jazz Quintet, 2 pm
 Jan. 24-Feb. 7 Bethlehem acts as an evening overflow shelter, as part of the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County program

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www.youtube.com/user/
 BethlehemChurchA2

The Washtenaw ID: an ID for everybody

by William Lopez, Alana Lebrón, and Keta Cowan
U-M Groundcover Contributors

Hopefully, by now you have seen the Washtenaw ID Card in the hands of your friends and family. Maybe you even have one yourself; we do. Not only are we proud users of the Washtenaw ID Card, we are also lucky to be part of an evaluation team at the University of Michigan Schools of Public Health and Social Work that considers the impact the Washtenaw ID has on the health of those who apply for them.

We believe deeply in the ability of the Washtenaw ID to affect people's lives for the better, and wanted our evaluation to be broad enough to capture all sorts of benefits, but specific enough to capture narratives of identity, inclusion, and well-being. We also wanted to consider how experiences with the Washtenaw ID change over time, as more people become accustomed to their use all through the county. We thus spent many days assisting Washtenaw ID applicants at the County Clerk's Office, interviewing applicants from diverse backgrounds, and inviting applicants to complete a brief survey that asked ques-



The authors and Synod volunteers strategize about IDs for everyone, jokingly including Luchadores! (Luchadores is the Spanish word for wrestlers, who traditionally wear those masks.)

tions about their lives.

In the period leading up to the Washtenaw ID, the incredible advocates at Synod Community Services (read more about Synod at www.synodhelps.org) distinguished five demographic groups that they believed would most benefit from the implementation of the Washtenaw ID. For various reasons, these groups often face challenges when applying for State IDs or Driver's

Licenses.

Getting a state ID or Driver's License requires a significant amount of specific documentation about one's identity. Some people may not have these documents for unavoidable reasons, such as a fire in one's home. Paperwork

may also have been lost in transition from one home to another, from homeless shelters or inpatient facilities, or from incarceration and back. Many people come from countries with different regulations about personal documents, or may themselves be undocumented. Some may have IDs that list a sex that does not match their gender identities. For these applicants – and many others – the Washtenaw ID may

facilitate access to resources and places that require photo identification, such as government support, employment opportunities, libraries, or picking up one's children from school or prescription medications from the pharmacy.

Groundcover News has been generous enough to allow us space in the next few issues to share the stories of some Washtenaw ID applicants. We invite you over the next few months to learn more about the influence of the Washtenaw ID on the lives of Washtenaw County residents. We also encourage you, of course, to support the Washtenaw ID by applying for one yourself!

Learn more at www.washtenawid.com.

Ivers & Rickelmann, CPAs, PLLC
2929 Plymouth Road, Suite 350
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Phone (734) 994-7500
Fax (734) 994-0165

Thanks to GroundCover News for spreading the word and providing an outlet where there was none. We are proud to support your mission and good work!

A Washtenaw ID for Carina

by Nathalie Servin, Keta Cowan, & William Lopez
U-M Student Contributors

Editor's Note: This article is part of a series of vignettes that describe the lives of Washtenaw County ID applicants. For more information, please visit www.washtenawid.com.

Carina, a 31-year-old mother of two, has lived in Washtenaw County with her family for 11 years. Her two daughters attend a local elementary school and her husband is a cook at a popular restaurant in Ann Arbor. As a mother, Carina recognizes the value of educating her children. She hopes to start a college fund for them and also wishes to take them to the library to cultivate a love for books and reading.

Like any mother, Carina wants to give her children the best childhood experience she can; however, Carina is an undocumented immigrant, a term used to describe an individual living in the United States without the legal permission to do so. That status forces her, as well as her family, to live a life without security and certain liberties. Like many in Washtenaw County, Carina has called the United States home for over 10 years, but lives in fear every day and is prevented from doing things that most people take for granted.

Nancy, Carina's eight-year-old daughter,

asked her mom why she is unable to attend fieldtrips with her and her classmates. Carina lied, telling Nancy that it is very hard for her to take time off work. Nancy was disappointed and reverted her attention to the toys she was playing with. Carina was distraught and struggled to fight back tears. Nancy and her younger sister, Jessica, are not aware that their mother is undocumented. Carina keeps it a secret because she does not want her children to experience the fear and stress with which she contends on a daily basis. Carina has even had trouble picking her children up from school because the teachers and staff ask for a state ID, but she can only present her Guatemalan passport.

A couple months ago, Carina's husband, Mario, came down with the flu. Weeks went by and Mario's health did not improve. Mario is also undocumented, which means he and Carina are not eligible for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act and can only afford to seek medical attention for serious health problems. (In Washtenaw County, undocumented immigrants can apply for insurance through the Washtenaw Health Plan. For more information, call 734-544-3030.)

Carina watched as her husband became more and more ill, and she felt increasingly helpless. She went to the nearest pharmacy and attempted to buy Mario some over-the-counter medicine, but

was unable to because she could not present a "valid" form of ID.

Mario's health worsened because he refused to miss work for fear of losing his job, which was difficult for him to find and does not offer sick-time. Carina begged Mario to see the doctor and when he agreed, she drove him to the nearest emergency room. The doctor diagnosed Mario with bronchitis and sent a referral to the pharmacy for medication. Carina drove to the same pharmacy as before, concerned that she would not be able to pick-up the medicine that Mario needed to get better. Luckily, the technician working at the pharmacy counter accepted her Guatemalan passport. For Carina, and most immigrant residents, there is no guarantee that their non-U.S. passport will be accepted as proof of identity.

There are many challenges that Carina faces, but the most difficult is the inability to drive with a valid driver's license. Although Carina only drives out of necessity and to places nearby, she is frightened by the possible repercussions. Her husband reminds her every time she gets behind the wheel that she cannot go too far or be gone too long because she could get pulled over by the police, which she fears could lead to her arrest or deportation. As such, Carina will usually drive only to take her children to and from school.

Lately, Carina has noticed that banks are becoming stricter about identifying folks who attempt to make withdrawals from their accounts. Carina has had this account for almost six years and suddenly she is having trouble accessing her money. In addition, Carina and Mario have been working very hard to save money for a down payment on a home for their family but they are not sure that they will be approved for a loan because they are undocumented. Carina tries to stay hopeful and not get discouraged. She is committed to purchasing a home for her family and starting a college fund for her daughters.

This month, Carina applied for and received a Washtenaw County ID card. She is very happy and hopeful about this. She sees this ID card as a step forward and something that will help her feel more comfortable. Carina is tired of feeling judged for using a Guatemalan passport and wants to feel more security when she leaves her home to go out into the community. Excitedly, she tells the County ID Program volunteer helping her complete the application form that her first stop will be the bank to make a withdrawal to take her family out for a movie this afternoon, and then she will head directly to the elementary school to pick up her daughters from class.

Justice: absence of oppression, presence of opportunity



by Angie Martell
Groundcover
Contributor

As we start the New Year, I reflect on how I would like the legal system to be different. I would like to see the system contained in our legal principles more evident in practice. I would see the principles behind the words that appear in our legal buildings transformed into reality: "Equal Justice under Law" and "Freedom, Truth, Equality and Justice" – rather than the eye-for-an-eye justice that I occasionally see in the legal system.

We as a legal system have failed to truly live by these words. Courts charged with following these principles have often focused more on their definition of justice than on seeing justice as part of the greater whole that encompasses our democracy and legal system. Instead of seeing justice as having your day in court or retributive punishment, it should be about equality and fairness and forgiveness and rehabilitation.

As President Obama said in July 2015 at an NAACP meeting, "Justice is not only the absence of oppression but also the presence of opportunity."

The problem with the concept of justice in the legal system is that determining what is "just conduct" or determining what is "just by law" is subjective in nature. When you have lawmakers, judges, and prosecutors who do not have diverse life experiences, what they determine to be "just conduct" is reduced by their own moral compass without taking into account the totality of what happened to this person who comes before the Court. Seldom do I see the willingness to explore this instead of simply imposing the prescribed penalty. As a consequence, seldom does the public feel trust in the legal system.

Fear looms very large in the legal system. Lawyers have been systematically trained to perpetuate this fear through the discussion of outcomes and possible penalties. The legal system often makes people act out of fear, and that is not what justice looks like. Throughout my career as an attorney, I have faced this fear-based system many times and the fears are often of the consequences that are ancillary to the trial.

In criminal law, you are supposed to be considered innocent until proven guilty and you are supposed to have a jury of your peers, but often for communities of color that is not the case. You may have to pay a prohibitively high bond to be released from jail while awaiting trial, you may have to return to court multiple times, you could face losing your job for the time you may need to take off, and, should you testify, the prosecutor could resurrect your past crimes and use them against you. In civil law, the costs of litigation are often too insurmountable for some litigants to "have their day in court."

In family law, divorces, paternity, custody, and parenting time are also strangely skewed because the entire process is public and adversarial. One's entire marriage or relationship with a partner and/or child or children is present for the world to see. Parties are often not afforded the time they need to heal in order to make informed choices. Cases are scheduled and tracked on a computer system and must run based on that computer system, instead of the realities that the parties may be facing. The structure is adversarial in nature and the pleadings so toxic that it makes possibilities for solutions difficult.

Throughout the years, courts have attempted to make changes through restorative justice and peacekeeping court models. These are good, but in order to truly change the legal system we need to make some drastic, fundamental changes.

First, let us confront the facts:

- America has become one of the most litigious countries in the world.
- The majority of laws on the books are written from the perspective of what is not wanted and for a need to control.
- The criminal justice system doesn't make us safer and it comes with high costs, both financial and to our fundamental principles.
- Prisons have become a business that is shame-based.
- The United States has 5 percent of the world's population but we house 25 percent of the world's prisoners.
- We spent \$80 billion on incarceration in our country in 2010 alone.
- The system of fines and penalties is partially funding the legal system, yet the majority of litigants and defendants cannot reasonably pay these costs, especially those for probation.
- The average American cannot afford to hire an attorney.
- 50 percent of our marriages end in divorce and are dissolved through an adversarial process.

Fundamental changes needed:

Access to the legal system – There has to be greater access to the legal system by litigants representing themselves. Information regarding legal processes needs to be more accessible to people

who have no legal training. Costs for filings need to be lower.

Trust and faith in the system – We talk about "good faith" in the justice system but too often there has been bad faith. The legal system should provide timely and reliable resolutions of disputes, regardless of the incomes of the parties.

Role of judges and prosecutors – If prosecutors and judges are the gatekeepers, then we need more transparency and accountability from them. We need the immediate institution of a civilian complaint review board, as well as independent investigations of police actions, instead of law enforcement and prosecutors making decisions regarding complaints by the public.

We must **reanalyze the norms on culpability, sentencing and mass incarceration** and we must overhaul and rebuild the legal system around principles of reconciliation and rehabilitation.

Family and probate law need to be reviewed in a whole different context, removing the adversarial nature and instituting a process that is more holistic.

True change will come only if we the people demand better from lawyers, lawmakers, judges and the legal system as a whole. Many in the legal system will say that the power to change really lies with the legislatures, not the lawyers or judges, but I think the power lies in three words: "We the people." Reform and change is in the hands of all of us – remember this when you have the opportunity to vote in November.



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A new approach to fast food: Freshii

by Alice Newell
Groundcover Contributor

The hustle of mall shopping can be challenging. When buyers take breaks at food courts for a bite to eat, they want their food quickly so they can continue on their quest. Briarwood Mall welcomes a new approach to fast food by introducing Freshii to their line of many restaurants. This eatery offers tasteful organic food to the public. Their cuisine consists of a broad spectrum of nutritious soups, salad bowls, wraps, burritos, smoothies and so much more.

Freshii started in 2005 under their original name of "Lettuce Eatery," which served 98 percent vegetable-based salads. However, when the company decided to incorporate meats in its menu, their outlook changed along with its name. Mustafa Hamade, the Briarwood Freshii proprietor, said, "The restaurant chain had planned to cross the Canadian border to America for about a year. They chose Briarwood Mall to make it convenient for shoppers to find it."

Freshii agreed on a two-store deal in the city of Ann Arbor but plans to eventu-



The Briarwood Freshii store prepares healthy fruits and vegetables anew each morning prior to their opening at 8 a.m.

ally expand throughout the Washtenaw area. People who walk through the doors of Freshii are not called "customers" but "guests." The eatery's philosophy is that a visitor should be welcomed with a smile, as you would in your

home, and then you offer them your best. A warm, smiling staff greets each guest and are graced to serve with a positive, professional demeanor.

Fast foods normally leave a consumer bloated and barely able to function afterward, but Freshii's organic choice food aims to energize the body. By choosing healthy foods, consumers can make an investment that will have long-term health effects.

Mustafa, who has studied the nutritional value of food, explained it in this manner: "Your health is worth the investment to extend and sustain a

healthy lifestyle."

There are Freshii foods to suit all nutritional needs, from detoxification to caloric intake. Ali Hassan Makki, the assistant manager of the Briarwood store, expounded on Freshii's motto of wellness – "Eat. Energize." – with an analogy. Makki said, "If a guest has a choice between eating a candy bar or an apple, the eatery would be the option of trying something that's better for their body with a mixture of quality food. Freshii emphasizes the benefits of eating healthy by offering the consumer the apple and so much more."

Freshii of Briarwood serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. By the way, it's the only restaurant in the mall that serves breakfast, so the early risers and mall walkers have a place to go for a nutritional bite to eat while shopping. It is organic originality at its best for their guests. They cater, as well. Choosing this restaurant is a good start to set a body on a path of healthy nutrition.

You can submit orders to Freshii by phone at (734) 995-3008 or email them at briarwoodmall@freshii.com.

826michigan: promoting creative writing and robot awesomeness

continued from page 6

plaining which character they thought had stolen the diary, how and why the character had stolen it, and why they (the kids) had reached that conclusion. When they were done came the surprise reveal: Dr. Blotch proclaimed that there was no stolen diary, and the children had been expected. It was all designed to trick the children into writing movie plots, and now Dr. Blotch had twenty new movies to sell to Hollywood.

The children, joined by the storyteller and the characters, felt that this was not fair. Things all worked out eventually, and the children were able to get their writing back – in a printed and bound

volume that included their interviews with the suspects and all the stories they had written – but the entire episode was a great demonstration of Dr. Blotch's manipulative nature.

826michigan gets funding from individual donations, grants, the robot shop, and occasional crowd-sourcing events. The computers, books, and furniture used in the back room were all donated, and the store itself (and most of the merchandise) was designed inside and out by volunteers. The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation funds the creative writing table during tutoring hours, available for students who have finished their homework and have nowhere else to go until their

parents arrive from work; the Rotary Club sends volunteers; and a grant from the Knight Foundation is funding the Detroit Robot Factory.

While 826michigan has long had a presence in Detroit, current Detroit programs have had to share other organizations' space. However, the lease has been signed for a new location in the Eastern Market. Contrasting with Liberty Street's do-it-yourself robot supplies, the new location at 2501 Russell Street is inspired by the Motor City assembly-line concept, offering high-quality complete robots from the Detroit Robot Factory – while tutoring takes place upstairs, visible from within the two-story shop through glass panes

high up on the walls on all sides.

This is one of the pivotal moments in 826michigan's history, setting the organization up for a successful new decade. But the expansion comes with increased concerns. Already, 826michigan serves approximately 3,000 students annually, with a paid staff of nine. "We could not exist without the volunteers," says Randolph, "and we're going to need more people than ever with the growth in Detroit coming up."

To get involved with 826michigan, visit Liberty Street Robot Supply & Repair at 115 East Liberty Street in downtown Ann Arbor, or visit 826michigan.org or onwardrobots.com.

Cryptoquote Solution

What you get by achieving
your goals is not as
important as what you
become by achieving your
goals.

– Zig Ziglar

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| 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 8 |
| 1 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 5 |
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| 35 | A | L | I | | | O | R | I | E | L | | O | H |
| 39 | T | A | K | E | | N | O | P | R | I | S | O | N |
| 43 | A | R | E | A | | | S | I | T | I | N | | T |
| 46 | L | E | N | S | E | | D | | E | E | L | S | A |
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| 55 | N | O | M | I | N | E | E | | | | T | E | N |
| 62 | T | A | K | E | | C | E | N | T | E | R | S | T |
| 65 | I | T | I | N | | | E | N | A | T | E | | U |
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Minestrone Soup



by **Liz Baumann**
Groundcover Contributor

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive or cooking oil
- One 15-ounce can diced tomatoes (I like to use fire-roasted)
- 2 tablespoons snipped parsley
- 1½ teaspoons dried basil
- ¾ teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- ⅛ teaspoon pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 2 cups desired vegetables (e.g., sliced green beans, chopped broccoli, sliced carrots, sliced zucchini, mushrooms)
- Parmesan cheese, grated
- ¾ cup beans or ½ cup noodles (optional)

Directions:

In a large pot cook the onion, celery and garlic in hot oil until tender. Add the tomatoes, parsley, basil, oregano, pepper and bay leaf. Then add the vegetable broth. Bring to a boil and reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Add the desired vegetables. Simmer, covered for 25 minutes. Remove the bay leaf and serve with Parmesan cheese.

I make this every few weeks in the winter for a delicious, healthy soup. You may want to add ¾ cup of beans or ½ cup of broken spaghetti noodles during the last 15 minutes of preparation.

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